

Notes: opposing White Horse Reservoir Development Consent Order (DCO)

Possible Timetable (early)

- Thames Water and co. intend to submit their DCO Application '*late in November 2026*'
- The Planning Inspectorate then have 28 days to accept the Application.
- If they accept it, they will publish it on the website which is already dedicated to the project (See below).
- **Action once the DCO Application has been submitted**
 - Organisations and individuals have a minimum of **35 days** to register as an objector.
 - It could be as high as 80 days (as it was with the Botley Solar Farm DCO application) if there are 'complex issues' (as there would seem to be with WHR), **but do not bank on this**. The registration is via the website <https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/WA010005>
 - Your objection can be as long as you like and cite as many issues as you like, but cross-refer to the consultation response, and any other relevant communications.
 - If you object, it is not obligatory to attend hearings and speak. Just for info, there were over 1200 registered objectors for the Botley West Solar Farm DCO – overwhelmingly from individuals.

Actions now

1. You can register **now** to receive updates on the progress of the Thames and partners DCO process for WHR by visiting the Planning Inspectorate's website:
<https://national-infrastructure-consenting.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/WA010005>

you will then have warning when the PI publish the DCO documents, and maximise your chance to register your objections when the time comes.

2. The Vale DC and OCC are in meetings with Thames Water to discuss their objections and try to get answers to the inadequately consulted issues from Thames' DCO consultation.¹

Unfortunately, the government removed the need for Statutory Consultations on 24th July, so there is no statutory mechanism to demand further '*Targeted Consultations*' on specific issues, as the Vale hoped. There are still the Common Law ('*Gunning*') principles however, which demand adequate and informed consultation, so pressure can still be kept up for more transparent consultation before any DCO is launched.

¹ Flood risks, Dam breach analysis, Emergency drawdown, Water quality, Biodiversity, Construction logistics, and Security implications.

3. ***How can Parishes help in this?***

Parishes can help by sending the Vale and OCC a list of their concerns, and ***particularly where they believe the facts in the pre-DCO consultation were not made transparent, were glossed over or were simply omitted.*** A covering letter should ask for the Vale and OCC's assurance that these concerns are used in pre-DCO meetings with Thames Water. This will help because:

- a. It will lend strength to the larger councils' efforts.
- b. It can be shared later (or even simultaneously) with Thames themselves.
- c. It can form the basis for an approach to the Planning Inspectorate itself – which we at GARD are trying to develop using legal sources.

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GARD
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